

REMARKS:

Claims 2, 5, 6, 11, 14, 15 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7-10, 12, 13, 16-19, 21 and 22 are pending in the application.

Applicants wish to advise the Office that the paragraph numbers indicated in this response are as indicated in the XML formatted specification as electronically filed, and may differ from the numbering used by the present viewing systems in the USPTO.

Paragraph [0001] has been amended now to indicate the correct U.S. Department of Energy contract number.

The Office objected to the drawings as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p) sections (4) and (5), as reference numeral "36" has been used to designate multiple items, and also because reference numeral "12b" appeared in the drawings but not the specification.

Paragraph [0038] has been amended now to clearly indicate that numeral 12b refers to the collection of 'other' useful tools as listed in the specification.

Paragraphs [0040] and [0045] have been amended now so it is clear that numeral 36 refers only to the thickness of the wall.

Applicants believe the objections to the Drawings have been rendered moot in light of the above amendments to the specification. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Office withdraw all objections to the Drawings.

The Office rejected claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hawthorn US 2,197,392, and further rejected claims 9 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Hawthorn US 2,197,392 in view of Thomeer US 4,971,147.

In the present invention, what is desired are apparatus and methods to protect a transmission line, routed through the central bore of a downhole tool, from drilling fluids, cement, wireline tools, or other components traveling through the central bore. This apparatus, therefore, needs to securely hold the transmission line against the wall of the downhole tool and protect the transmission line from what may be traveling through the central bore.

In order to clearly and distinctly point out these important structural and functional differences, independent claim 1 has been amended now to state that the pre-formed interface is a single continuous component extending most of the length of the downhole tool and comprises a first surface formed to substantially conform to the outside contour of a transmission line. Applicants believe that this amendment renders claim 1 novel and non-anticipated by Hawthorn US 2,197,392, and non-obvious over Hawthorn in view of US 4,971,147. Regarding obviousness, the intermittently spaced, removable clamp structures of Thomeer hold the cable away from the wall and expose the cable to what may be traveling through the central bore. Applicants regard this feature by Thomeer as now 'teaching away' from the claims as amended above, rendering this reference non-obvious when combined with Hawthorn.

Claims 1 and 10 have been amended now to include the above described limitations which are believed novel, and therefore allowable, over the cited references. Applicants further believe that claims 3, 4, 7-9, 12, 13, and 16-18, being dependent upon allowable base claims 1 and 10, are also allowable.

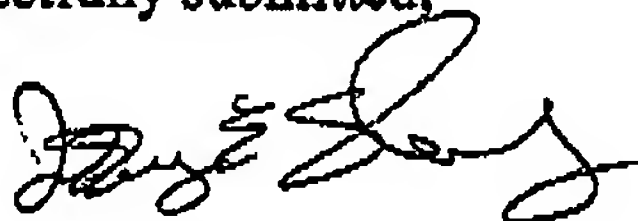
Claim 20 was objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claim 19 but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 19 has been amended now to include the limitations of original claim 20, and claim 20 has now been canceled. Applicants therefore believe that claim 19 and its dependent claims 21 and 22 are therefore now also allowable. As a result, applicants respectfully request that claims 1, 3, 4, 7-10, 12, 13, 16-19, 21 and 22 be allowed.

In view of the arguments and amendments made herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

It is believed that there are no fees due at this time. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required at any time during the prosecution of this application without specific authorization, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account 180584. If there are any questions concerning the above, please contact the undersigned at (281) 878-5658.

Respectfully submitted,



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